families caught between conscience and population pressures.

On the whole, Protestant thought has refused to erect an a priori moral hierarchy of methods of conception control. As Karl Barth has pointed out, every method involves a certain amount of human manipulation and is "unnatural" in this sense; but irresponsible parenthood is not in keeping with man's true nature.

Considerations of health, effectiveness, mutual acceptability and Christian conscience are issues that confront the Christian couple. Abortion is strongly opposed, except to save the life or health of the mother. Permanent sterilization raises strong moral doubts, though the issues need more searching study. Complete abstinence is opposed in the Lambeth Report as destructive to a major purpose of marriage. As for periodic continence, contraception, or safe drugs to inhibit ovulation, the Mansfield Report finds no inherent moral distinction. As several Protestant statements argue, motives rather than methods constitute the primary ethical issue. And family limitation may be as great a moral obligation in some circumstances as parenthood in others.

However much the future may belong to the emerging Protestant consensus on responsible parenthood, recent events have underscored the fact that it cannot be won by the half-hearted approach that still characterizes too many Protestant leaders and agencies. A clear and common witness, firm but positive in character and rooted in sound theological conviction, is what the times call for. Nothing less is worthy of our heritage.

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Our Twentieth Year

of publication will begin with our next issue. Times have changed considerably since the first issue of *Christianity and Crisis* appeared in the dark days just prior to the beginning of World War II. The immediate issues were different, but the same basic urging that the nation face its responsibilities remains. Nor has our essential task—to engage in the dialectic between Christian insight and contemporary event—changed. We hope to print articles of special interest to our readers in this year. And we will suggest some ways in which you can help us celebrate this important event.

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